J. J. PICKLE
10TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

WASHINGTON ADDRESS:
CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

COMMITTEES:
INTERSTATE AND FOREIGN COMMERCE
SCIENCE AND ASTRONAUTICS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

February 13, 1974

Mr. Francis J. Mulhern
Administrator
Animal and Plant Health Inspection
Service
Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Mr. Mulhern:

Enclosed you will find a copy of a rather alarming letter concerning availability of screw worm eradication funds in Texas.

I am sure you realize the extent of damage which can be incurred because of this infestation, and I would encourage your department to explore every possibility in channeling additional funds in this direction.

Some preventative action at this point would pay off in the long run in terms of both economy and productivity.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

J. J. PICKLE

JJP:mc
Enclosure

THIS STATIONERY PRINTED ON PAPER MADE WITH RECYCLED FIBERS

WAELDER INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

S EDWARDS,
School Principal
665-2161

CHARLES T. DUNN, Superintendent
P. O. BOX 516 PHONE 665-4091
WAELDER, TEXAS 78959

WESLEY QUILLIAN,
Elementary School Principal
Phone 665-3211

January 28, 1974
P. O. Box 531
Waelder, Texas 78959

RECEIVED

U. S. Representative Abraham Kazen
1514 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Representative Kazen:

I have recently learned that due to inflation the screw-worm eradication program has used up all of the money allocated for the program by the federal government as of a week or so ago. There isn't any money now and supposedly the program has to go until June before getting funds again. Because of the weather and lack of money, officials see a situation developing similar to the 1972 year when the program got completely out of hand with something like 90,000 screwworm cases being confirmed. The screwworm program has saved Texas livestock producers millions of dollars. It has also aided in getting more beef to the consumer and served as a good-will builder between the U. S. and Mexico in their cooperative effort to eradicate the screwworm for both livestock producers and governments.

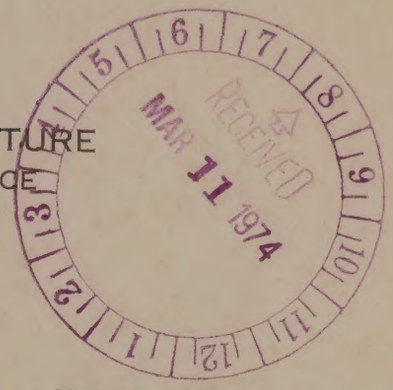
It appears to me that a program of this importance should not be allowed to die or seriously set back because of a time table on federal allocation of funds. Your attention into this matter is appreciated.

Yours truly,

Don Clark

Don Clark
Vocational Agriculture Dept.
Waelder High School

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250



MAR 6 1974

Honorable J. J. Pickle
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Pickle:

This is in reply to your letter of February 13, 1974, on behalf of Mr. Don Clark of Waelder High School in Waelder, Texas, who is concerned about the financing of the screwworm program.

There are three different approaches that should be taken in solving the screwworm problem; they are: (1) Continue to operate the barrier of sterile screwworm flies along the United States-Mexico border at the maximum capacity of the Mission, Texas, plant: (2) eradicate screwworms from Mexico and establish a barrier of sterile screwworm flies at the Isthmus of Tehuantepec: (3) improve animal husbandry practices involved in the prevention and treatment of screwworms to the preprogram screwworm levels that existed prior to 1962.

The first two approaches are the responsibility of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The Department is making arrangements to increase the funding available at Mission, Texas, so that this program can continue to operate at the maximum level. Partial funding for the Mexico program has been provided by the Congress, and the production of sterile flies in the new fly production plant, soon to be constructed at Tuxtla Gutierrez, Chiapas, Mexico, will begin as soon as it is completed.

The third approach is in the hands of the livestock producers who, because of the success of the program to date, no longer have sufficient experienced ranch labor available to prevent and treat screwworm cases. When environmental conditions for the spread of screwworms exist as they did in the Southwestern United States in 1968 and 1972 and in Arizona and Sonora, Mexico, in 1973, our livestock populations became more vulnerable to attack from screwworm flies migrating from Mexico. Until screwworms are eradicated from the United States and Mexico and the sterile fly barrier is established at the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, we must encourage the livestock producer to inspect his animals for screwworms; collect samples of larvae from wounds and

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

MAR 8 1974

Honorable J. J. Pickle
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Pickle:

This is in reply to your letter of February 13, 1974, on behalf of Mr. Don Clark of Weatder High School in Weatder, Texas, who is concerned about the financing of the screwworm program.

There are three different approaches that should be taken in solving the screwworm problem; they are: (1) Continue to operate the barrier of sterile screwworm flies along the United States-Mexico border at the maximum capacity of the Mission, Texas, plant: (2) eradicate screwworms from Mexico and establish a barrier of sterile screwworm flies at the Isthmus of Tehuantepec: (3) improve animal husbandry practices involved in the prevention and treatment of screwworms to the preprogram screwworm levels that existed prior to 1952.

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submit them to our laboratory at Mission, Texas, for identification; to schedule branding, dehorning, castrations, and calving to avoid the worst part of the screwworm season; and to use approved insecticides to prevent and treat cases of screwworms.

We appreciate the interest that both you and your constituents show in the screwworm program.

Sincerely,

s/ J. K. Atwell

Acting Deputy Administrator
Veterinary Services

cc:
M. E. Meadows, APHIS:VS, Mission, TX - w/copy of incoming
Paul Becton, APHIS:VS, Hyattsville, MD - w/copy of incoming
N. L. Meyer, Mexico City, Mexico - w/copy of incoming
O. H. Graham, ARS, Kerrville, TX, - w/copy of incoming

Honorable J. J. Pickle

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We appreciate the interest that both you and your constituents show in the screwworm program.

Sincerely,

s/ L K. Atwell

Acting Deputy Administrator
Veterinary Services

cc:
N. E. Meadows, APHIS:VS, Mission, TX - w/copy of incoming
Paul Becton, APHIS:VS, Pittsville, MD - w/copy of incoming
N. L. Meyer, Mexico City, Mexico - w/copy of incoming
O. H. Graham, APS, Kerrville, TX, - w/copy of incoming

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20250

RECEIVED MAR 14 1974

MAR 11 1974

Honorable Lloyd Bentsen
United States Senate

Dear Senator Bentsen:

This is in reply to your letter of February 21, 1974, on behalf of Mr. Don Clark of Waelder High School in Waelder, Texas, who is concerned about the financing of the screwworm program.

There are three different approaches that should be taken in solving the screwworm problem; they are: (1) Continue to operate the barrier of sterile screwworm flies along the United States-Mexico border at the maximum capacity of the Mission, Texas, plant; (2) eradicate screwworms from Mexico and establish a barrier of sterile screwworm flies at the Isthmus of Tehuantepec; (3) improve animal husbandry practices involved in the prevention and treatment of screwworms to the preprogram screwworm levels that existed prior to 1962.

The first two approaches are the responsibility of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Department is making arrangements to increase the funding available at Mission, Texas, so that this program can continue to operate at the maximum level. Partial funding for the Mexico program has been provided by the Congress, and the production of sterile flies in the new fly production plant, soon to be constructed at Tuxtla Gutierrez, Chiapas, Mexico, will begin as soon as it is completed.

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We appreciate the interest that both you and your constituents show in the screwworm program.

Sincerely,

s/ J. K. Atwell

Acting Deputy Administrator
Veterinary Services

cc:
M. E. Meadows, APHIS-VS, Mission, Texas - w/c incoming
Paul Becton, APHIS-VS, Hyattsville, Maryland - w/c incoming
N. L. Meyer, Mexico City, Mexico - w/c incoming
O. H. Graham, ARS, Kerrville, Texas - w/c incoming

Honorable Lloyd Bentsen 7

We appreciate the interest that both you and your constituents show in the scholarship program.

Sincerely,

s/ J. K. Atwell

Acting Deputy Administrator
Veterinary Services

cc:
M. E. Meadows, AMHIS-VB, Mission, Texas - w/o incoming
Paul Reeves, AMHIS-VS, Hyattsville, Maryland - w/o incoming
M. L. Dwyer, Mexico City, Mexico - w/o incoming
VO. H. Graham, ADS, Kerrville, Texas - w/o incoming

Secretary's Control No:
05 - 33292
Referred to: APHIS
Date: FEB 25 1974
FOR AGENCY RESPONSE

United States Senate

February 21, 1974

Respectfully referred to:

Congressional Liaison
USDA
Washington, D. C.

Because of the desire of this office to be responsive to all inquiries and communications, your consideration of the attached is requested. Your findings and views, in duplicate form, along with return of the enclosure, will be appreciated by

Lloyd Bentsen

Lloyd Bentsen U.S.S.
Please Return Attn: Muffet

Form #2

Honorable Benito Medero
Ministro de Ganaderia y Agricultura
Montevideo, Uruguay

MAY 22 1974

Dear Mr. Medero:

This is in reply to your letter of March 21, 1974, to Dr. M. E. Meadows about the screwworm problem in Uruguay.

Our scientists would like to receive several samples of myiasis producing larvae from Uruguay preserved in a small bottle of rubbing alcohol. Please send the samples to Dr. R. K. Strickland, USDA-APHIS-VS, Building 320, ARC-East, Beltsville, Maryland 20705. We are interested in comparing the morphological characteristics of screwworms from Uruguay with the various strains of screwworms in the Northern Hemisphere.

We were pleased to have Engineer Armellini visit the screwworm fly production plant at Mission, Texas. We believe that arrangements can be made for an experienced scientist who has specialized in screwworm research and control to go to Uruguay. He can conduct a preliminary study of the problem there which could lead to the establishment of a screwworm eradication program in South America. Since you requested that only one technician be named to do the study, we believe that this person should be a research scientist with many years experience in research and control of screwworms. Any one of the following three scientists would be capable of conducting this study. They are:

Mr. A. H. Baumhover
Investigation Leader
USDA-ARS-ENTRES
P.O. Box 1011
Old Drum Road
Oxford, North Carolina

Dr. R. C. Bushland
1514 Xanthisma Street
McAllen, Texas 78501

Dr. O. H. Graham
USDA-APHIS-VS
Entomology Research Division
P.O. Box 232
Kerrville, Texas 78028

We suggest that you contact one of these men and make the necessary arrangements. At a later date, if you desire an additional specialist in the screwworm eradication field, we would be glad to arrange for

one of our veterinarians with extensive experience in screwworm eradication to go to Uruguay to assist in further planning. We believe that travel expenses for a scientist to conduct a 1-month study of screwworms in Uruguay would cost approximately $1,300. If Dr. Bushland were to be selected, a provision would probably have to be made to pay his salary because he recently retired from the Agricultural Research Service.

Please feel free to contact either this office or the U.S. Agricultural Attache in Montevideo for further information.

Sincerely,

J. M. Hejl
Acting Deputy Administrator
Veterinary Services

William F Dobbeen

Forwarded, Foreign Agricultural Service

cc:
Agricultural Attache
FAS
Nels Konnerup, Washington, D.C.
R. K. Strickland, APHIS-VS, Beltsville, Maryland
R. C. Bushland, McAllen, Texas
O. H. Graham, APHIS-VS, Kerrville, Texas ✓
A. H. Baumhover, ARS-ENTRES, Oxford, North Carolina
L. Henderson, ARS, Beltsville, Maryland
M. E. Meadows, APHIS-VS, Mission, Texas
J. Wommack, APHIS-VS, Hyattsville, Maryland
M. J. Tillery, APHIS-VS, Hyattsville, Maryland

J. M. Hejl
Acting Deputy Administrator
Veterinary Services

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE
VETERINARY SERVICES
FEDERAL CENTER BUILDING
HYATTSVILLE, MARYLAND 20782

Dr. Chalou
Dr Harris
Dr. Schuman
for reply by staff
Pae 4/29

ubject: Correspondence from Uruguay re Screwworm Program

April 26, 1974

GEB

o: G. E. Blake, Acting
Assistant to the Deputy Administrator

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Schubert [illegible]man
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Knowles Lyee

Enclosed is a letter from an official of the Department of Agriculture of Uruguay inquiring about the feasibility of establishing a screwworm eradication program in that country.

Dr. Meadows and I discussed this on the phone sometime back and he mentioned that there was a representative of that country who visited Mission some time last summer. This letter from Sr. Benito Medero is a little unclear as to whether he is trying to arrange a repeat of this visit or if he wants to start discussions regarding the feasibility of establishing a program.

This letter is being forwarded for appropriate reply.

J. H. Wommack

J. H. Wommack, Acting
Regional Director - South Central

Enclosure

USDA Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service
Veterinary Services
Screwworm Eradication Program
P. O. Box 969
MISSION, TEXAS 78572

April 2, 1974

Sr. Benito Medero
Ministro de Ganaderia y Agricultura
Montevideo, Uruguay

Dear Sr. Medero:

We received your letter regarding the feasibility of eradicating screwworms in your country. We understand the seriousness of your problem, having discussed this with Ing. Armellini when he was visiting us last year.

I am writing to let you know that your letter is being sent to our headquarters in Washington, DC, for their action on your request. I am sure you will be hearing from them soon.

Sincerely,

M. E. Meadows, Jr.
Veterinarian in Charge
Animal Health

APHIS:AH:MEMeadows,Jr:bl 4-2-74

Ministro de Ganaderia y Agricultura

Montevideo, March 21st, 1974.

Dr. Marion Meadows
P. O. Box 969
Mission Texas 78572
U.S.A.

Dear Sir,

Among the sanitary problems that affect livestock of Uruguay, one of the most important is the loss provoked by the fly Cochlyomia hominivorax.

A commission formed by farmers and Government officers with the purpose of carrying on some preliminary studies with the possibilities of establish a campaign against the fly in Uruguay, has estimates that only in sheep the annual losses in the country goes up to 5 millions dollars.

According to some information received, it is concluded that owing the geographical situation, any erradication plan could not be put in practised without the neighbours help, i.e. Argentina and Brasil.

Recently an Uruguayan technician, Ing. Armellini, visited the Experimental Station and therefore I dare to bother in order to know the factibility that one of its technician comes to do some preliminary study with the purpose to establish a regional plan to erradicate the fly. In the case that you accept our proposal, we wish to know previously the costs of such a study mission and the need of the counterpart that we will have to give.

Awaiting your reply,

Sincerely yours,

BENITO MEDERO
Ministro
de Ganadería y Agricultura

BM/nmp.

IT WAS A NO-GOOD MONTH

Texas had 67 per cent of its 1974 screwworm cases to date in May.

During May, 590 cases of the voracious pasture pest were identified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Mission Lab technicians. Going into the month there had been 282 cases identified since January 1.

Only two previous Mays had been worse--two years ago when 4,197 cases were turned up and 1962 when the all-time record for the month was set with 6,308.

Sixty-six counties reported one or more cases led by Webb again with 81. It was the third straight month and the fourth time in five months that Webb County has had the dubious distinction of being the screwworm capital of the nation.

Other leaders were Jim Hogg with 42, Starr 41, Dimmit 39, LaSalle 37, Hidalgo 36, Duval 24, Live Oak 20, Zavala, Bee and Medina, 16 each; Willacy and Brooks, 13 each, and Frio and Kenedy 10 apiece.

Nueces and Aransas were the only South Texas counties without a case reported during the month.

May's 590 outbreaks compare to 176 the month before and to only 54 a year ago.

"It could get rougher," says Dr. M.E. "Cotton" Meadows, Jr., director of Mission Lab, "especially if we have another bad year for Gulf Coast earticks like 1973."

Extension Service Entomologist James A. Deer, Weslaco, predicts just that--a heavy infestation of Gulf Coast ticks this summer and early fall.

These ticks inhabit the ears of large animals. After engorging they drop to the ground leaving a large wound ready for the screwworm fly. More than 75 per cent of the 8,913 screwworm cases in Texas last year were identified in South Texas. Some 80 per cent of these were in tick-related wounds in the ears of cattle.

About the only protection available against earticks, says Deer, is to spray or dip cattle on a regular basis, every two weeks if possible. Smears applied directly to the ears of the animal provide short-term protection also.

Heaviest tick infestations were expected in July, August and September, Deer warned.

SCREWWORMS FLOCK TO NAVELS

Until tick season arrives most screwworms are being found in navel wounds on newborn calves. Meadows said that if livestock producers would give special attention to the following five points the continuing battle against the pest would be much more effective:

1. Carefully check animals for infested wounds on a regular basis.
2. Submit samples from all infestations to the Mission Lab, Box 969, Mission, Texas for positive identification.

-more-

3. Treat the navels of newborn animals and all other wounds with an approved organophosphate smear or spray.

4. Watch treated animals until the wounds are dry and danger of screwworm infestation has passed.

5. Spray or dip animals regularly and make certain their ears are well saturated.

Meadows warns producers not to drop worms on the ground once they are removed from wounds. "They should be killed immediately. Screwworms normally drop from the host animal and burrow into the ground to pupate before emerging as adult flies. Allowing them to drop on the ground while still alive only makes it easier for them to continue their life cycle."

STERILE FLY DROPS

Nearly a billion sexually active but sterile flies were dispersed in May over four states and the Republic of Mexico. Texas was showered with 525-million. Arizona received 80-million, California 3,000,000 and New Mexico 2,000,000.

Mexico received 371-million, ranging from 172-million dropped on Sonora to 1,500,000 on Baja California Norte.

The total of flies dispersed in 1974, after first being exposed to the sterilizing cesium 137 rays in the Mission Lab irridiator stands at 4.15-billion through the end of May.

-jlf-

DRY WEATHER REDUCES SCREWWORM POPULATIONS

Like the old proverb goes, "it's an ill wind that blows no one good."

While South Texas' developing drouth brings little but pain and frustration to most farmers and ranchers, Dr. M.E. Meadows, Jr., couldn't be happier.

"Another couple of weeks of this and we could be pretty well over the hump," said the director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Southwest Screwworm Eradication Project at Mission.

In the Rio Grande Valley and adjacent counties, the usual overwintering area for the costly livestock pest, there has been virtually no rain so far in 1974, and little in November and December of 1973.

"When screwworms pupate and come out of the ground they have to have moisture or they can't survive," he said. "They also tend to remain under the soil longer when it's dry so this holds down their numbers, too. But wet or dry they have to emerge eventually and there's no moisture when they do it's all over."

The longest a screwworm has ever been observed to remain in the pupal stage is 9-10 weeks, Meadows said.

It's been about that long now since the last good rain soaked many areas of South Texas, he noted. In portions of Southwest Texas, it has been four-and-one-half months since measurable moisture was recorded.

"If it remains this way through the third week in March, we should have the overwintering population about where we want it," the veterinarian predicted.

Significantly, he pointed out, more than half the cases in Texas during February occurred in Live Oak and Bee Counties, which had good rain showers during the period. On the other hand Hidalgo and Brooks Counties, frequently the center of winter screwworm developments, had but one case between them.

Twenty cases were recorded during the month in Texas, the most for a February since 1962. Arizona had one outbreak reported.

PRODUCERS URGED TO BE ALERT

Dr. Lee Stephens, area veterinarian for the Texas Animal Health Commission, urged all livestock producers to inspect their animals and treat all wounds with protective chemicals, even if no screwworms have been reported in the immediate area.

An approved organophosphate compound is recommended.

If screwworms are found, TAHC is willing to furnish the spray rig and crew if the rancher will buy the insecticide.

"We want to spray all infested herds, if possible, Stephens emphasized. "Especially if there have been an excessive number of wounds."

-more-

He revealed that during the recent period of high winds the Mission Lab had switched much of its sterile fly dispersal on infested ranches from air to ground release in the interests of accuracy and improved public relations.

"It's kind of hard to convince a rancher with a number of worm cases that sterile flies have been dropped over his land when he can't find any boxes because an air drop missed his place due to strong wind currents," Stephens pointed out.

Stephens also said fly drops had been doubled over Mexico in an area between Falcon Lake and Monterrey to combat a developing buildup there.

NON-SCREWWORM RELEASES

Texas' 111 non-screwworm cases was the most for the month since 1969, when 122 were identified. Arizona had 5, the same as last year. There were 2 in New Mexico and one in California.

These identifications were almost as important as screwworm cases because if they don't show where screwworms are, they do indicate where they are not, Meadows pointed out.

"We also know producers are alert and concerned in those areas. When nothing happens, no samples come in, we never know what the situation might be."

STERILE FLY DROPS

In the short month of February 665.9-million sterile flies were released over Mexico and Texas. As is usually the case this time of year, the Republic received the bulk of them 481-million. Texas received the other 184-million.

In the last two years the weekly sterile fly releases have climbed steadily from 136.7-million in 1971 to 198.6-million last year.

-jlf-

EAR TICKS BUILDING UP

From the standpoint of screwworm prevention "it may already be too late for branding, dehorning and castrating livestock in South Texas."

This is the opinion of James A. Deer of Weslaco, area entomologist with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service.

Deer also said recent examination of a herd of cattle in northern Starr County showed a heavy infestation of Gulf Coast ear ticks.

"The ticks are showing up much earlier than usual this year," said Deer, "and there are more of them, too."

It was a heavy outbreak of ear ticks--one of the heaviest in recent memory--which set off last year's screwworm outbreak and led to a soaring total of cases in Brooks, Kenedy, Hidalgo, Starr and Willacy Counties.

These five counties accounted for about 80 per cent of Texas' screwworm cases last fall.

By providing many open wounds on the ears of livestock, ticks provide the environment necessary for the survival of the damaging flesh-eating insect.

Unlike other worms, the screwworm shuns dead flesh and will only eat living tissue, Deer noted.

"Although the screwworm season isn't really here yet it isn't too early to start thinking about them," he emphasized.

"Until cold weather returns a livestock producer's whole program should be geared to the prevention of screwworms. This means postponing animal surgery."

IF OPERATE YOU MUST

For the rancher who fears he can't postpone animal surgery that long, Deer has this advice:

1. After working livestock, treat all wounds and hold animals in confinement where they can be observed until the wounds heal.

2. Place the herd on a regular spray program.

3. Treat all wounds--including brands--promptly with an organophosphate smear or spray. When worms are found, forward samples to the Mission Lab for identification.

Worm sample kits can be obtained from County Extension Agents, livestock inspectors, most veterinarians or from the Mission Lab, Box 969, Mission, Texas.

THE SITUATION NOW

Sixty screwworm cases were confirmed in Texas during March, while only five cases were reported for the corresponding month a year ago. In 1972, however, March cases tallied 101, to become the second highest number for that month since the program began in 1962.

-more-

Since January of this year, Texas has recorded 106 cases, with Webb, Hidalgo and Live Oak Counties reporting the greatest numbers. Arizona's 1974 cases now total four, and California has recorded eight cases this year.

NON-SCREWWORM SAMPLES

Texas livestock producers are checking their animals closely for worm cases, U.S. Department of Agriculture officials at Mission noted. Ranchers submitted 302 non-screwworm samples in March, the highest number for that month since 1963. A year ago, negative samples numbered only 144.

STERILE FLY RELEASES

USDA officials reared and distributed 771,654,800 sterile flies during March, with Texas receiving 292,242,800; Arizona, 3,240,000; and Mexico getting 476,172,000 in the states of Tamaulipas, Nuevo Leon, Coahuila and Sonora.

-jlf-

SCREWWORM FIGHTER RECALLS '72

If the last week of June was Texas' worst week for screwworms this year--and it was--then why is Dr. M.E. "Cotton" Meadows so serene?

Because Meadows, director of the USDA sterile fly program, can vividly remember 1972, that's why.

In the week ending June 29 Texas had 47 outbreaks, the third straight week of rising screwworm figures.

A year ago, he recollects, his weary insect identifiers counted 4,901 positive cases passing under their microscopes the last week in June, an all-time record for one seven-day period.

"I'm never happy about even one case of screwworms," the veterinarian emphasized, "but if it comes to choosing I'll take this year over last every time."

Although he's sympathetic to the trials of beleaguered Arizona--now in the throes of what promises to be its worst screwworm plague ever--Meadows said he'd "be surprised if they have that many cases out there all year."

The Grand Canyon State had 218 last week which raised its total to 921 for the month of June. Texas had 145 in June, fewer even than New Mexico's 165.

For June the four states had 1,259 outbreaks.

The same month a year ago the Lone Star State was swamped with 15,884 cases and there were 16,131 in all states.

Meadows declared he "was still optimistic about Texas' prospects for a good year if it doesn't rain any more. We've had a fantastic year so far, considering the moisture."

For the first half of 1973, Arizona had 1,068 infestations; Texas 284; New Mexico 174; and California 36. All last year California had only 27 confirmed cases.

Although he, too, continues optimistic about Texas, Dr. James Novy, Mission veterinarian in charge of field operations, isn't quite as cheerful as Meadows. "The continuing rain could make trouble. We need dry weather through September 1 to ensure against the chance of a heavier outbreak this fall."

Novy is cheered, however, by the continued absence of cases from several South Texas counties which often have heavy infestations this time of year. Through June no cases had yet been reported in Atascosa, Bee, Bexar, Cameron, Dimmit, Frio, Maverick, McMullen or Nueces counties. Last year on the same date the same nine counties had reported a ghastly 3,409 cases.

Webb County, long a screwworm stronghold, has had six cases but none since January. "Actually, all those were collected at the end of 1972," Novy said.

Cochise County, Arizona now ranks as the country's screwworm Mecca with 244 infestations for the month and 337 for the year. Five Arizona counties have had more than 100 cases this year.

Texas' top plague spot, Brooks County with 51 cases, ranks only 11th, being topped by eight in Arizona and two in New Mexico.

Dr. Novy advises producers against all animal surgery and urges extreme care in management practices where livestock could be injured until the screwworm danger has eased.

NON-SCREWWORM SAMPLES

As usual Texas turned in most of the non-screwworm samples, 500 of 719 for the nation. It was the highest total for the month in 10 years in the Lone Star state and the second highest overall count. Oklahoma, which hasn't yet had a case in '73, forwarded a surprising 69 samples to rank close behind second place Arizona.

STERILE FLY DISTRIBUTION

A total of nearly 781-million sterile flies were dispersed in both the U.S. and Republic of Mexico. The four screwworm states received almost 517-million with about 60 per cent being showered on Texas.

Producers should send worm samples to the Mission Lab for identification, Box 969, Mission, Texas 78572. Sample kits are available from County Extension Agents, livestock inspectors and many veterinarians.

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CASES CONTINUE TO CLIMB IN ARIZONA

Arizona has just experienced the worst May for screwworm cases in its history, and the cases continue to climb.

By Texas standards, the 222 Arizona cases were relatively light. Nevertheless, the case count was almost twice as many as the Grand Canyon state had suffered previously.

Texas had only 54 confirmed cases in May. While this is not bad, there's still room for improvement. Except for 1972--the year of THE epidemic--it was the worst May for the Lone Star State in four years and the sixth most severe in the 12-year history of the Southwest Screwworm Eradication Project.

Arizona's 222 infestations compared to its previous record for the month of 115 in 1963, the first year for which there are any screwworm records there.

Except for 1970, when there were only two cases in the country, this is the first time Arizona has had a worse May than Texas since 1966. In fact there were more cases of screwworms there this month than in the last nine Mays combined.

It wasn't a good month in New Mexico, either, for 20 cases were recorded, the most for the period since '63.

Although California had but 11 confirmed outbreaks, they represent the second worse count ever in the Far West state, topped only by 23 in 1968.

These individual tallies add up to 307 cases for the country during May and boost the log since Jan. 1 to an even 400 infestations.

With cases reported from 10 of Arizona's 14 counties to date, Dr. James Novy, veterinarian in charge of field operations at the Mission Lab, offers little encouragement in the near future. "I don't see any letup in Arizona before the end of October, the traditional end of the season. Conditions out there are ideal for screwworms and they're moving in and multiplying. I think it's safe to assume there will be many more cases there this year than last."

Novy urged all livestock producers to postpone branding and animal surgery and to minimize any activities which tend to result in wounds until the present outbreak abates.

Producers are urged to inspect animals frequently for wounds, to treat any worms discovered with an approved insecticide and send samples to the Mission Lab, Box 969, Mission, Texas 78572.

NON-SCREWWORM SAMPLES

Thanks to a high rate of activity by Texas producers and a comparatively low rate of incidence there, non-screwworm samples received at Mission Lab climbed to 777, the highest count for the month in eight years. Texans submitted 634 of them and Arizonans 50. Suprisingly, 44 were received from Oklahoma which hasn't reported a case yet this year.

STERILE FLY DISPERSALS

Fly drops in May totaled 810-million, of which 373-million were dispersed in the Republic of Mexico. Texas received about as many, 355-million, and Arizona was bombed with 64-million, a big increase over the month before.

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AUGUST WAS A NOTABLE MONTH

August was the month that Texas began catching up with Arizona in screwworm cases.

It was also the month that California neared an all-time record.

And Colorado confirmed its first case since the Southwest Screwworm Eradication Program was established at Mission, Texas in 1962.

And finally, things got pretty much out of control during August in South Texas, mostly because of tick wounds. – poor reasoning

With the unwanted assistance of generous rainfall and an extraordinary Gulf Coast tick population, the Lone Star State counted 1,013 cases of screwworm during the month to 919 for Arizona. It was the first time since April that Texas had occupied its customary position as the screwworm capital of North America, an appelation it had gladly surrendered to Arizona in the intervening three months.

For the year to date, however, the Grand Canyon State is still in the lead with 2,887 outbreaks to 1,647 for Texas, 731 for New Mexico, 101 for California and 1 for Colorado.

With tick wounds "by the millions" providing an ideal habitat for the exploding screwworm population, extreme South Texas was declared virtually out of control by Dr. M.E. Meadows, Jr., director of the Mission Lab. "Until we are rid of the ticks there's no way we can drop enough sterile flies to help the situation much."

CONGREGATE IN SOUTH

Some 83 percent of the cases in Texas this year have been in five South Texas counties. In fact with cases soaring rapidly and the worst still to come, Brooks County with 455 outbreaks already counts 1973 as its second worst screwworm year and stands in good position to soon surpass its epidemic figures of 1972, totals many thought might stand for decades.

The same scenario can be written for neighboring Jim Hogg County which has had 221 for the year to date.

Each had over two-thirds of its 1973 screwworm reports during the month of August. Traditionally September and October are much more severe months for screwworms.

Last year Brooks had 1,602 cases, Jim Hogg 729.

SWAHRF NOTES 12TH ANNIVERSARY

Trustees of the Southwest Animal Health Research Foundation, along with other livestock industry leaders of the seven southwestern states cooperating in the screwworm eradication program, held their 12th anniversary meeting in Austin in late August to review screwworm outbreaks and other animal health problems.

The livestock leaders also presented a special award to a past chairman and long-time trustee, Gov. Dolph Briscoe. He resigned his Foundation position before seeking the governorship. C.G. Scruggs, Foundation president, presented an antique walnut chair to the governor. The inscription on the chair stated:

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"Presented to Dolph Briscoe by SWAHRF on behalf of 100,000 livestock producers and sportsmen for a decade of dedicated service as a trustee and president."

Briscoe said the chair will have a place of honor in the governor's office.

COLORADO CONFIRMS CASE

Meadows had little information on the Colorado case, which was discovered in a wound in a calf near Trinidad, just across the state line from New Mexico. Although New Mexico ranchers have reported no cases within 100-150 miles of the Colorado out-break, Meadows suspects it was migratory rather than trucked in.

"There's lots of open country out there where screwworms could breed without being detected," he speculated, "especially when ranchers aren't used to looking for them and probably don't work their cattle too often."

He isn't fretting much about this isolated case, though, because he knows that in a month or six weeks cool weather will be wiping out any fertile flies that have ventured that far north.

Puny as California's 101 cases for the year may seem compared to other states with much higher counts (one New Mexico county, three in Texas and four in Arizona have had more outbreaks than that) it is not far from the all-time record for that state of 135 cases established in 1968. California had 47 cases in August, and could very easily set a new record high for the year during September.

Not all the news has been bad, actually. Eight South Texas counties which recorded more than 7,100 infestations between them a year ago have yet to report a single case in 1973. They are Aransas, Bee, Bexar, Frio, Maverick, McMullen, Nueces and Refugio.

NON-SCREWWORM TOTALS

The non-screwworm receipts totaled 384, which is the second highest for the month since record-keeping started in '62. Only August a year ago was better with 445 such samples.

STERILE FLY DISPERSALS

Fly drops numbered 773-million, of which Texas got well over half, 436-million. Arizona received 115-million, new Mexico 54-million and California 9-million. The rest were dispersed over the Republic of Mexico, 158-million of them.

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SCREWWORMS PEAK IN OCTOBER

According to Dr. Marion E. Meadows, Jr., veterinarian-in-charge of the Mission Screwworm Laboratory, the 1973 screwworm season probably peaked in October.

This opinion was greeted by sighs of relief in most South Texas livestock quarters, especially those in Brooks County.

It's been a tough year for cattlemen in this Deep South Texas county. Even tougher than last year, in fact.

Texas recorded 2,254 confirmed screwworm cases in 68 counties during October. Brooks County had 605 of them. Of the month-long total 428 were recorded the first week of the month, 595 the second week, 613 the third and 420 the fourth.

"We should now begin seing a steady decline in cases," Meadows commented. "We hope we can concentrate eradication efforts in Texas from now on in the areas where screwworm flies can overwinter, while cold weather is taking care of the rest of the state."

Cases continued at a heavy rate over most of South Texas during the month. After Brooks came Starr with 320, Hidalgo 291, Jim Hogg 179, Duval 131, Kenedy 121, Webb 96, Zapata 78, Jim Wells 77 and Kleberg 57.

The October total compares to 1,786 cases in September and to 14,503 in October a year ago. Through the first 10 months this year Texas has recorded 5,687 cases to 86,154 for the same period in 1972.

For all of 1973 Brooks County has had a record-breaking 1,878 infestations confirmed, 32 per cent of the state's caseload.

Even during last year's unprecedented epidemic which eventually reached more than 90,000 cases statewide, Brooks County had only 1,602 confirmed infestations.

Jim Hogg is the only other South Texas county with record potential this year. So far 698 cases have been received from there compared to 729 for all last year.

"Except for those few South Texas counties which have experienced heavy infestations, I feel that we've had an extremely good year," said Meadows. "This is especially true when you consider the excellent growing weather for screwworms over most of the state."

With 2,254 cases for the month, it was the fourth worst October in the Mission Lab's 12-year history. Topping October 1973 was 1972 with 14,503 cases, 1962 with 8,702 and 1968 with 4,046.

It was a record month in a record-breaking year for Arizona, as the Grand Canyon State recorded another 640 cases to boost its 10-month total to 4,345, nearly double its former all-year high of 2,317 established less than 12 months ago.

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New Mexico looks like it'll escape record status as it ended the month with 1,075 confirmed cases, with only 94 recorded in October. New Mexico had 250 cases in September. Its record year was 1963 when 1,447 cases were confirmed at Mission Lab.

CALIFORNIA RECORD PUSHED HIGHER

Although California had only 26 cases in October, they contributed to a modest record of 186 cases in the Golden State. Before this year California's previous high was 135 in 1968.

Two states chose October to come up with the first screwworm cases they've ever reported--Iowa and Nevada. Each had one case and, with cold weather moving into both areas, they're unlikely to have another, Meadows explained. "The screwworms were shipped in from elsewhere, it appears. By the time this report is out I'm sure they will no longer be a worry in either area."

The tally for the month in the six states reporting cases was 3,016 making it the fourth worst October of all.

NON-SCREWWORM REPORTS

A total of 285 non-screwworm reports were received during October at Mission Lab, almost identical with the number received a year ago. Most were from Texas but 13 did come in from Arkansas, Louisiana and Oklahoma, confirming the screwworm-free status maintained by those states during 1973.

STERILE FLY DROPS

Dispersals of sterile flies totaled 840-million in both the U.S. and Republic of Mexico. The U.S. received 612-million with Texas getting the lion's share, 435-million. Six Mexican states were showered with 228-million sterile flies in an effort to reduce case numbers.

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